



קריאת שמע

THE SHEMA

Say the Shema with deep kavanah, especially the first two lines in which we accept Hashem's rulership as King. Say the first passuk aloud, while covering the eyes with the right hand so nothing will distract you from focusing on Hashem's Oneness.

While saying Shema, pause at the commas in order to bring out the following meaning: Every Jew should listen and understand (pause), that Hashem is our God (pause) and that Hashem is the one and only ruler and King. When saying the word אֶחָד, pronounce the ה for the amount of time that it takes to think about accepting Hashem's rulership as King over the seven heavens and the earth, (which equal the number eight - the gematriya of the letter ה,) but do not slur it. Pronounce the ד (which has a gematriya of four) for the amount of time that it takes to think that Hashem is alone in His world and that He rules in all four corners of the universe.

See additional halachos and minhagim on page 642.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ | אֶחָד:

We declare
Hashem's
Oneness

Say the following line quietly:

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלָכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Pause slightly before saying וְאֶהְיֶה, in order to make a clear separation between our acceptance of Hashem's rulership as King (described in the first passuk of Shema) and our acceptance of the mitzvos which Hashem commands us (described in the following paragraph of Shema).

In the following paragraph, touch the tefillin shel yad while saying וְקִשְׁרָתְכֶם לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ, and the tefillin shel rosh at וְהָיָה לְטָפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ. Then touch the fingertips to the lips.

Pause slightly between הַיּוֹם and עַל לְבַבְךָ. If these words are read together, they can be mistakenly interpreted to mean that Hashem's mitzvos should only be on our hearts "today" but not tomorrow. Pause slightly between בְּכָל and לְבַבְךָ, and between עַל and לְבַבְךָ, in order not to swallow any letters.

Love Hashem

וְאֶהְבֵתָ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּכָל | לְבַבְךָ,
וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ, וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ
הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם,

Every Jew should listen and understand, **שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל**
that Hashem is our God, **יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ**
and that Hashem is the One and only **יְיָ | אֶחָד:**
ruler and King in the seven heavens, the
earth and the four corners of the universe.

The name of Hashem's glorious **בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד**
kingdom is blessed forever and ever. **מְלָכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:**

You should love Hashem your God with **וְאֶהְבֵתָ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ,**
all your heart. Keep all of His mitzvos **בְּכָל | לְבַבְךָ**
willingly, like a servant who does what
his master wants because he loves him.

Love Hashem with all your soul. **וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ**
Be ready to do all of His mitzvos,
even if you might lose your life.

Love Hashem with all your might. Be **וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ:**
ready to do all of His mitzvos, even if
you might lose all of your money.

These words of Torah, which I command **וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה**
you to do today and every day, should **אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם**
always be new and fresh to you,

וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה
אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם

The only way we can
connect to the essence
of Hashem (אֲנִי) is by
fulfilling His mitzvos.

And they must be
done "today," while
the neshamah is in
a body. In Gan Eden,
the neshamah can
no longer connect to
Hashem's Essence.

תורה אור ט, ג

עַל ׀ לְבַבְךָ: וְשִׁנְנָתָם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָם,
 בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ, וּבְלַכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ, וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ,
 וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְקִשְׁרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ, וְהָיוּ
 לְמַטְפֹּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: וְכִתַּבְתָּם עַל מְזוּזוֹת
 בֵּיתְךָ, וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

עַל ׀ לְבַבְךָ: and they should be engraved on your heart; you should always be thinking about them.

וְשִׁנְנָתָם לְבָנֶיךָ You should teach Torah to your children and students, until they know it well enough to answer any question on it.

וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָם You should be involved in the words of Torah and speak them whenever you can;
 בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ when you sit in your house,
 וּבְלַכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ when you travel on the way,
 וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ when you lie down at night,
 וּבְקוּמְךָ and when you get up in the morning.

These words, the words of Shema, should be written in tefillin. You should tie the tefillin shel yad on your arm, as a sign to remember Hashem,

וְהָיוּ לְמַטְפֹּת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ and the tefillin shel rosh should be put on your head, above the area between your eyes.

You should write these words of the Shema on mezuzos, which you should put up on the door posts of your house and on the gates of your courtyards, cities, and countries.

וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ, וּבְלַכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ, וּבְקוּמְךָ

The "you" in this passuk is also referring to the neshamah. The passuk can be explained as follows: Before the neshamah comes down into this world it is "sitting in its house," in shamayim, learning Torah. It then "travels on its way," down into a body in this world. Eventually the person "lies down" in the grave when the person passes away. Learning Torah protects the neshamah throughout all of these stages, until it "rises" with Techiyas Hameisim when Moshiach comes.

היום יום "ג' טבת" אב

Touch the tefillin shel yad while saying וְקִשְׁרֹתֶם אֹתָם לְאוֹת עַל יְדֵיכֶם, and the tefillin shel rosh at וְהָיוּ לְאוֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם לְטוֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיכֶם. Then touch the fingertips to the lips.

Pause slightly between הַיּוֹם and לְאַהֲבָהּ. If these words are read together, they can be mistakenly interpreted to mean that Hashem only commanded us to love Him “today” but not tomorrow.

Pause slightly between בְּכֹל and לְבַבְכֶם; between וְחָרָה and אֶרֶץ; between וְאַבְדֹתֶם and מְהֵרָה; between וְשִׁמְתֶם and אֶת; between וְקִשְׁרֹתֶם and אֹתָם; between וְלִמְדֹתֶם and אֹתָם; and between אֹתָם and אֶת, in order not to swallow any letters.

Pronounce the ע of the word נִשְׁבָּע properly so it should not sound like נִשְׁבָּה, which would mean that Hashem is “captive,” chas v’shalom.